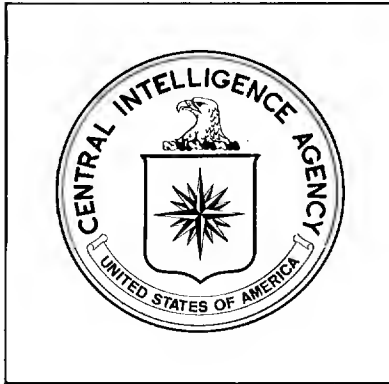


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**Middle East
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SC No. 04377/75
May 14, 1975

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MIDDLE EAST - AFRICA - SOUTH ASIA

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Israel

Raids into Lebanon

Aggressive patrolling into Lebanon by Israeli Defense Forces units over the past three days appears to be aimed as much at the Lebanese as at the fedayeen.

Harassment of Israeli reconnaissance patrols last week by mortar fire from Lebanese forces was apparently the principal cause of the recent Israeli actions, which included raids into villages and the taking of prisoners. The approach of the celebration on May 15 of Israel's independence day--often the occasion for fedayeen terrorist incidents--was probably another factor.

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Although Israeli reconnaissance units routinely patrol inside the southern Lebanon border, Israeli troops had not entered villages or taken captives since the major clashes with fedayeen and Lebanese army units last January. On Monday, however, Israeli troops raided a border settlement inside Lebanon and reportedly blew up a cafe before returning with a number of Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners. Searches of other border villages on Tuesday and Wednesday brought a response from Lebanese army units, which fired mortar and perhaps artillery shells. No casualties have been reported from any of these activities, and Israel announced on May 14 that it had released some of the villagers taken during the raids. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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